

### REMARKS

The applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough examination of the application and request reexamination and reconsideration of the application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

The applicants acknowledge and appreciate the Examiner's allowance of claims 1-16, 30-52, 54-69 and 73-78.

The Examiner objects to the specification at page 8, line 22. The applicant has deleted the extra word from the sentence.

The Examiner rejects claims 17, 18, 25-28, 53, 70 and 71 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,279,676 to *Morrison et al.* The Examiner also rejects claims 21, 22 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Morrison et al.*

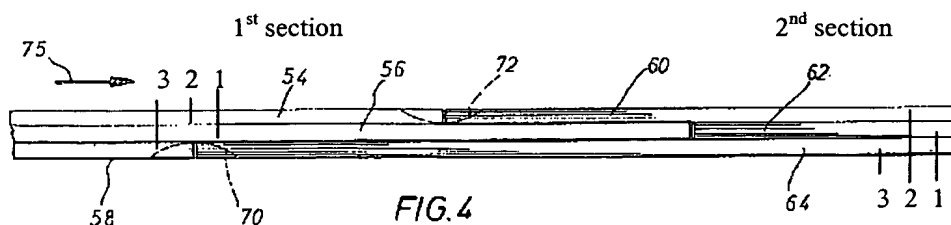
The applicants have amended independent claim 17 to add the elements of dependent claim 18. *Morrison et al.* does not disclose each and every element of the applicants' amended claim 17. Particularly, *Morrison et al.* does not disclose the applicants' claimed relationship between the first and second sections and the plies thereof. *Morrison et al.* discloses a tongue and groove relationship between the three layers of the two adjoining sections. See *Morrison et al.* Figs. 3 and 4 and claim 1.

In contrast, the applicants' invention of claim 17 includes the first section having an edge with a first ply thereof extending outward from a second ply, and a third ply offset inward from the second ply. The second section includes a first ply offset inward from a second ply, and a third ply extending outward from the second ply. Additionally, the first ply of the first section is disposed on the second ply of the second section, and

the second ply of the first section is disposed on the third ply of the second section.

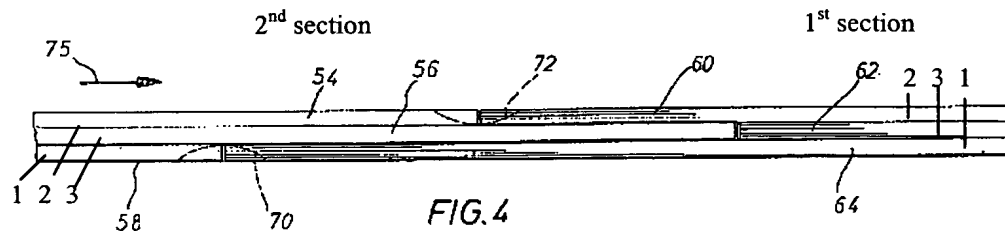
Because of the tongue and groove configuration disclosed in *Morrison et al.*, the applicants' claimed relationship between the two sections and the layers of the sections is not disclosed by *Morrison et al.* Even if the relationship between the layers within each section are as claimed by the applicants, as shown below, the applicants' claimed relationship between the layers of each section is not disclosed by *Morrison et al.*

See, e.g. two alternatives of Fig. 4 of *Morrison et al.* below. In both examples, the layers within each section are oriented as claimed by the applicants. In the first example, the first section includes layers or plies 54, 56 and 58 and the second section includes layers 60, 62 and 64. Although not labelled in the original Fig. 4 of *Morrison et al.*, for convenience below the first, second, and third layers in each section are marked 1, 2, and 3 respectively in the only combination that meets claim 17's orientation of the layers within each section. However, in this example, the second ply 54 of the first section is not disposed on the third ply 64 of the second section, in contrast to the applicants' claim.

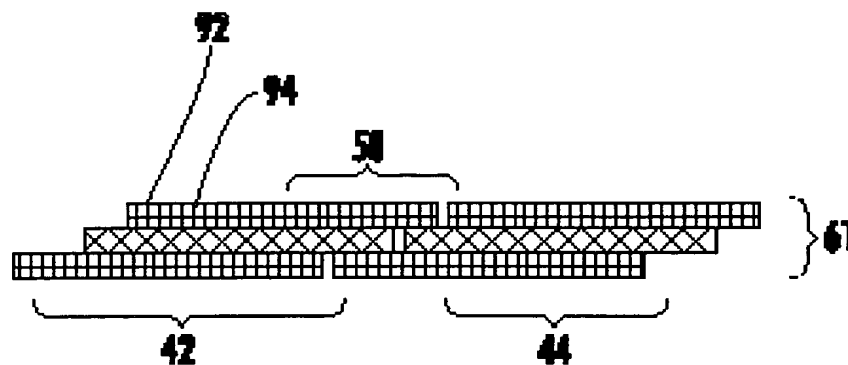


See also, e.g., Fig. 4 of *Morrison et al.* below in a second example where the first section includes layers 60, 62 and 64, and the second section includes layers 54, 56 and

58. However, in this example, the first ply 64 of the first section is not disposed on the second ply 54 of the second section, in contrast to the applicants' claim.



Also compare the embodiment of the applicants' invention shown in Fig. 5 below with the tongue and groove of *Morrison et al.*



Thus, *Morrison et al.* does not disclose each and every element of the applicants' invention of claim 17. Independent claim 70 has been amended similarly. Accordingly, claims 17 and 70 are in condition for allowance. Claims 18, 53 and 71 have been cancelled. Claims 21, 22, and 24-28 depend directly from claim 17. Claim 72 has been

amended to depend from claim 70. Accordingly, claims 21, 22, 24-28 and 72 are also in condition for allowance for at least the foregoing reasons.

The applicants acknowledge and appreciate the Examiner's objection to claims 19, 20, 23, 29 and 72, stating that the claims are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but that the claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the elements of the base claim and any intervening claims.

New claim 79 includes the elements of objected to claim 19 rewritten in independent form and including intervening claims. New claim 80 includes the elements of objected to claim 20 and depends from claim 79. New claim 81 includes the elements of objected to claim 23 rewritten in independent form. New claim 82 includes the elements of objected to claim 72 rewritten in independent form and including intervening claims. New claim 83 includes the elements of claim 29 rewritten in independent form. New claims 84-87 depend from claim 83.

### CONCLUSION

Each of the Examiner's rejections has been addressed or traversed. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 17, 19-29, 70, 72, new claims 79-87, as well as previously allowed claims 1-16, 30-52, 54-69 and 73-78, are in condition for allowance. Early and favorable action is respectfully requested.

If for any reason this Response is found to be incomplete, or if at any time it appears that a telephone conference with counsel would help advance prosecution, please telephone the undersigned or his associates, collect in Waltham, Massachusetts at (781)

890-5678.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "T. Thompson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "T" and a long, sweeping underline.

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Thomas E. Thompson, Jr.  
Reg. No. 47,136